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THE
HOOP-PETTICOAT
VINDICATED,
IN
ANSWER
TO

*The Enormous Abomination of the Hoop-
Petticoat.*

By the LADIES most humble Servant

JACK LOVELASS.



L O N D O N :

Printed for J. COLLYER, in *Ludgate-Street.* 1745.

(Price Six-Pence.)

HOOP-PETTING

VINDICATED

A N S W E R

The Learned Answer of Mr. Hoop-



LONDON:
Printed for J. Gutter, in Langbath Street, 1745.
(Price Six Pence.)



T H E
HOOP-PETTICOAT
V I N D I C A T E D.

S I R,



Otwithstanding the Folly and Stupidity of your Performance, I think myself oblig'd to espouse the Cause of the fairest and most lovely Part of the Creation from your Insults, Ribaldry, Cant, and Ill-Manners. The fair and tender Sex, are taught by Nature to seek Shelter and Protection from ours; and therefore it is but reasonable, that while you, like a *Ruffian*, attack them without the least regard to Decency and good Manners, they should find a Friend capable of chastising you for your Insolence, and making you feel the Smart of their just Resentment—and the Ladies themselves shall own that I do you Justice,

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Tho'

'Tho' you are neither *Quaker* nor *Methodist*, no, nor a very *old Man*, as you are pleased to tell us, (tho' by your own Account you are not a very young one,) you are resolved to shew us that you have all the Preciseness of the first, the Cant of the second, and the peevish Obstinacy of the last ; mix'd with a Malevolence, that neither *Quaker*, *Methodist*, nor any old Man of common Sense and Humanity can be guilty of.

You begin your Reflections with saying that you have never been a *Woman-bater*, as all who know you can testify, especially those who live near your antient Seat in *Sussex*. Your very humble Servant, Sir, you must certainly have a very great Regard for the Ladies ; nor need you have dragg'd in those who live near your antient Seat to prove it ; for what is it to us whether you have a Seat in *Sussex*, or a Garret in *Grub-Street* ; nor can they certainly doubt of the Sincerity and Justness of that Regard, for you immediately add, " 'Tis true indeed, I always wish'd
" the dear Creatures a *little more Sense*."

Upon

Upon my Word, Sir, they have Sense enough to see your Folly, and good Nature enough to laugh at it. But this is not the only Compliment you make the *dear Creatures*, you have abundance of other Strokes equally complaisant and delicate: But what follows is not much to be wonder'd at, as the whole Sex in your Opinion are Fools.

Having thus, the better to insinuate your Advice, endeavour'd to remove those Prejudices that might arise from the Ladies conceiving an ill Opinion of your Person and Qualifications, and shewn them the sincere Regard you profess to have for them, you put us in mind that you, Sir, are a *Christian*, and therefore out of your great and super-abundant Piety, should be glad that these senseless Creatures minded *Cards* less, and their *Prayers* more; how are you a Judge whether the Ladies mind their *Prayers* or not? Would you have them make you a Witness of their private Devotions? No, no, you are not so much in their good Graces; and besides they are sensible that it is their Duty when they

pray to retire to their Closets, and perform their Devotions in secret. And I am persuaded that they comply with this Injunction too strictly for you or I to know any Thing of the Matter.

But your Piety has not yet spent it self, for you wisely add, and you should be glad “ if reading the Bible, and other Books of “ Religion, took up at least half as much of “ their Time as the reading of *Plays*, *Pamela’s*, *Novels*, *Romances*; nay, and *Tatlers* and *Spectators* themselves.” What a confus’d Jumble! One would imagine that your *Pamela’s* was a general Name, and not included in that of any of the others; why did not you say *Plays*, *Cato’s*, &c. since you might have done it with equal Propriety. But there would be no End of taking Notice of such Blunders as these. I shall only desire you to inform your Readers in the next Edition what those other *Books of Religion* are that ought to take Place of the *Tatlers* and *Spectators*; for I am not afraid to own that these Books alone are more valuable in themselves, and more adapted to reform
Man-

Mankind, than all the Bodies of divine Rubbish that have been writ by the Clergy since they were publish'd.

I can't forbear taking Notice of your concluding this short Lecture with another admirable Compliment. In the main, say you, I never objected against the sweet Females; but in a lawful Way, liked them daintily well. Dear sweet dainty Sir, did you so? don't you think them greatly oblig'd to you? Sure they must acknowledge the Honour. Tho' it is not very material to the Public whether you like them or not.

Your next Attack is upon the Clergy, but as they are more inclin'd to lay their Sacerdotal Habits aside, than to wear *Hoops* under them, your Remarks (pardon the Expression) seem altogether impertinent, as well as all that goes before, since it has no Relation to the Subject.

You begin with telling us, that you very well remember the first *Hoops* in 1709, and what every Body thought of this new Fashion, which considering your Affectation of appearing Young, seems a little

ex-

extraordinary. However in those Days, it seems, they were restrain'd within some reasonable Compass, —“ But now 'tis
 “ past a Jest, the whole Sex, in a man-
 “ ner, especially the younger Sort, the
 “ Misses, are by this prodigious *Hoop*
 “ become a perfect publick Nuisance.”

What, the dear Creatures, the sweet Females, you so wantonly describe, and whom you like so daintily well, become a perfect publick Nuisance? Is this your regard for the Ladies? for shame, Sir, retract, or never, presume to own the Power of Beauty. It is surely their *Hoops* and not their Persons that are become so suddenly Odious to you. However a Man so nice and dainty may be supposed to transfer his Dislike of the Thing to the Wearer, especially as you immediately add, that “ the very Sight of these cursed
 “ *Hoops* is enough to turn one's Stomach.” How elegant is this, how genteely express'd. Ah! Sir, I am shrewdly afraid that you are no more fond of religious Books than even the Ladies themselves: For you certainly never learnt to curse
Hoop-

Hoop-Petticoats out of the *Practice of Piety*. But as you say you laugh on one Side of your Face and cry on the other, I should be glad to know whether the laughing or crying Face prevail'd while you were writing this Passage ; and also, whether you don't pray on one Side of your Mouth, and Curse with the other ?

You next insinuate that many Hundreds have got their Deaths by wearing *Hoops*, but we must suspend our Belief of this, because it wants the most material Ingredient, *Proof* : Which *Proof* you cannot offer without proving yourself a *Woman-bater*, or, which is the same Thing, a mere Hoop-Superficialist, and then we may easily see how you came by the Petticoat Mortality ; for had you ever been inclin'd to have gone farther than the *Hoop-Petticoat*, you must have found other cloathing between the *Hoop* and that which you know nothing of, nor I think never ought to know, as you are at present thus naturally disqualified.

But it would be an endless Task to follow you thro' all the unaccountable Jargon you have thrown together on this Subject,

ject, I shall therefore throw your Objections into one View, and begin with the most material, which as you have scatter'd about your Pamphlet, and farther confirm'd by the Words of your grave, learn'd, and eminent Divine, may deserve peculiar Notice.

The Use of the *Hoop*, you make him say, “ is Sinful and Unjustifiable, because
 “ it is contrary to the Law of Reason and
 “ Nature : Upon the Account of its monstrous Disproportion, its absurd and
 “ foolish Expensiveness, its great Inconvenience both to the Wearers themselves,
 “ and to all those who are near them.”

This is both his and your Reasoning upon this Subject. You first assert, it is contrary to the Law of Reason and Nature upon account of its unnatural Disproportion. Pray who besides you and your Divine ever thought of the natural Proportions of Dress? If the Ladies must follow Nature, they must go naked ; for Nature gave them no Cloaths : And if it be criminal to disguise or conceal their Features, their Cloaths ought to be made to cover closely every Limb: If this be the
 Case,

Cafe, Petticoats and *Hoops*, great Coats and Jack-Boots, are all equally forbidden by the Law of Nature. And indeed the rude unpolish'd *Indian* will have better Arguments to prove that Dress itself is unlawful, than you can have to shew that *Hoops* are so. 'Tis true, that as all Allurements to Vice are criminal, so when Cloaths are contriv'd and adjusted to inflame the Minds of the Spectators with unlawful Desires, in a Country where Dress is consider'd, not only as a Covering but as the Veil of Modesty, it ought to be rank'd among the other Snares and Enemies of Virtue; since the Intention of the Wearer is vicious, and her Mind abandon'd and lost to all Sense of Shame. And this is the Reason why plaiting the Hair, and adorning the Person with Gold and Silver, is forbidden in the New Testament. Not that plaiting the Locks has any thing in its own Nature more criminal than tying it under the Head-Dress—not that Gold and Jewels are in themselves bad, or more unfit to be worn than Ribbands or Glafs, or less proper for

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Use

Use and Ornament. But as these were worn at that Time chiefly by common Prostitutes, the Apostle only enjoyns modest Ladies to distinguish themselves from these, lest by aping them in their outward Appearance, they should insensibly be led into the same Dissoluteness of Manners. But what is all this to the *Hoop-Petticoat*, or any Part of the Ladies Dress at present? Where is the Immodesty of that Dress which keeps Men at a Distance? Besides, those with great *Hoops* have as unexceptionable a Character, and as an inviolable a Regard for Virtue, as those who wear the least, or no *Hoop* at all; nor can they be charg'd, with the smallest Appearance of Justice, with a greater Degree of Pride, Vanity, or Folly, than they; nor with less of that Piety, Affability, and good Nature, which are the Sex's peculiar Charms.

If all this be true, which I believe no one in his right Senses will deny, your Assertion that, " Fashion ought to authorize no Dress, which outrages common Sense, confounds all Proportion, and is, in the Nature and Reason of Things

“ Things incongruous and immoral,” is intirely impertinent, since no Dress is immoral in the Nature and Reason of Things, that is consider’d abstractedly and separate from the Temper and Disposition of the Wearer.

The next heavy Charge your Friend the Clergyman has made against the wearing of large *Hoops*, is their absurd and foolish Expensiveness. You have rak’d together a great deal of Stuff to the same Purpose : In one Place you say, “ I pass
“ over the *vast foolish Expence* of so much
“ Silk, and other costly Materials, three
“ Times more than is necessary or convenient, only to cover such a huge Extent
“ of Canvas, or stripp’d Linen and Whale-
“ bone.” In another, you thus lament,
“ every Day poorer and poorer ! every Day
“ prouder and prouder ! Every Day less
“ and less coming in ! Every Day more
“ and more going out !” What a doleful Lamentation ! Pray, Sir, in the Name of common Sense, where did you pick up this ridiculous Jargon ? Ought a Lady of Fortune, or a wealthy Tradesman’s Daughter, think you to have no Regard to

the Encouragement of Trade and Industry ? Great *Hoops* are so far from being a hurt to the Society, that they are of very singular Service to it ; by encouraging and finding Work for a great Number of Hands that would otherwise be unemploy'd.

They not only require the Gowns to be exceeding wide, but increase the Consumption by wearing them out sooner than they otherwise would be. And this, what ever you may think of it, is of very great Service to the Nation in general, and consequently to every Individual, by employing our Poor, and increasing the Circulation of our Specie. In short, while thousands of Families are by the *Hoop-Petticoat*, kept from Misery and Distress, I shall always think it an Honour to be thought an Advocate for it.

Your next Objection, as stated by your reverend Friend, is, that great *Hoops* are
 “ contrary to the Law of God, as being
 “ inconsistent with the Modesty, Sobriety and Humility of the *Christian* Religion. It is, if not the Lust of the
 “ Flesh,

“Flesh, yet certainly the Lust of the Eye,
 “and the Pride of Life,” &c. Here, Sir,
 is another heavy Charge, which I shall
 endeavour to prove to be as groundless as
 the former. That they are not contrary
 to the Law of Reason, which is the Law
 of God written upon the Heart of Man,
 I have already proved, since they have no-
 thing either moral or immoral in them, but
 are in the Nature of Things entirely in-
 different. That they are not contrary to
 the revealed Will of God, I have endea-
 voured to evince, by shewing that those
 Texts which relate to Dress have no Re-
 lation to the Subject. But as there are no
 Texts which mention *Hoops*, you are for-
 ced to argue from a Consequence of your
 own Drawing, which I think very unjust.
 Your Friend says the Wearing a large
Hoop is inconsistent with the Modesty, So-
 briety and Humility of the Christian Re-
 ligion. You will not sure pretend to say
 that great *Hoops* raise immodest Thoughts
 in the Wearers; but if you mean to charge
 the Ladies with an Intention of raising un-
 chaste Ideas by this Dress in the Minds of
 our

our Sex, you are guilty of a Piece of Slander that you will never be able to justify, till you know their Intentions, and are become a Judge of the Motives of their Actions. *Hoops* might possibly have this Effect, and yet they be entirely innocent, for the most trifling Action may be the Cause of a Crime in others, and yet the Agent be entirely guiltless. But how do you know that they have this Effect? do you find it so by Experience? No, no, that cannot be the Case, your Age must secure you from all Temptation as well as Ability to Crimes of this Nature. Since great *Hoops* have been in Fashion for only two Years, and as it seems your Friend the Clergyman is pretty antient, his Case may be the same as yours; nay, you yourself sufficiently acquit the Fair Sex, of any Intention to corrupt ours, when you say, that “ young Men will
 “ certainly like young Women, even tho’
 “ they wear *Hoops*; but would like them
 “ better if they *wore none*.”

Tho’ you have made the Clergyman express little more than a formal Repetition of what you had said before, yet I can’t help

help putting you in mind that he has founded his last Objection upon a Supposition which overthrows abundance of your fine Flights. The great *Hoop*, he says, is, if not the Lust of the Flesh, yet certainly the Lust of the Eye and the Pride of Life. How does this agree with your representing it as the most odious Piece of Dress that ever was invented. “ The
 “ *Hoop-Petticoats*, you say, when con-
 “ tracted and huddled up into a Heap,
 “ make if possible, a more awkward and
 “ ungainly shew than when they were
 “ free and unconfin’d, they rise and fall
 “ into such hideous Wrinkles into such
 “ Mountains and Vallies, into such a va-
 “ riety of uncouth irregular Shapes, as
 “ exceed all the Descriptions of Painting
 “ or Poetry.” For the Truth of this, you appeal to the Eyes and Judgment of all who see them. This is a very odd Way of describing the Lusts of the Eye and the Pride of Life. Sure nobody can think any Vanity can attend the Wearing a *Hoop*, when you, with your usual Elegance, say that a Lady seated between two others
 looks

looks like a Higglers that sells Apples or Cabbages sitting on Horse-back between two Panniers. I should be glad to know what resemblance there is between a Chair or any other Seat and a Horse; and how a Lady thus seated appears like a Country Joan riding to Market. Supposing a *Hoop* really resembled a pair of *Panniers*, your fine Comparison would not hold good, except these Higglers-Horses left their Heads in their Stables, and jogg'd to Market without them.

I have now consider'd all the Arguments your Friend the Clergyman has made use of, in which, in the Heat of his Zeal, he has endeavour'd to prove that the wearing a large *Hoop* is sinful, unjustifiable, and altogether inconsistent with the Genius, Spirit, and Temper of the Christian Religion, and shall only now add, that he has advanced nothing New, nothing that has not before been urg'd against our Sex for wearing the Peruke, and shaving the Beard; which for a long Time were condemn'd by the Clergy, as an Affront upon Nature, and a Proof of the greatest Degree of Pride and Folly. However at length in spite of all their Efforts, the smooth Chin prevails, and all the reverend Honours of the bushy Beard laid in the Dust.

But I cannot conclude this Letter without

out taking notice of some Passages in your Pamphlet, which for their Singularity ought not to be pass'd over in Silence.

“ Behold one of them at Church, say
 “ you, after having receiv'd the Sacra-
 “ ment, which, by the by, considering
 “ her *Hoop*, she was not very fit for.”

What a Discovery is this! a *Hoop*, it seems, is a proper Disqualification for receiving the Sacrament. Dear Sir, is not a Petticoat as much so?

After this charitable and truly Christian Censure, it is no Wonder that you use the Epithets *Ungodly Hoops*, *Heathenish Hoops*, &c. and exclaim against their taking up so much Room at Church, though it is plain that were they twice as big as they are, there would be room enough in almost all the Churches in Town for the Hearers.

You then let us know how dreadfully you yourself are incommoded in your Devotions, one with the stiff Ribbs of her Petticoat breaks your Shins, while others attacking you in the Rear, bang your Hams and the Calves of your Legs. But is it the *Ladies* Fault, if *you* have fore Shins and weak Hams? If you are so tender, I would advise you as a Friend to keep out of harms-way, or else to get into some Corner where no *Hoops*

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can

can wound your Legs or Devotions.

You have some extraordinary Conceits on Hooping Barrels, and seem to take so much Delight in showing your Learning on this Head, that I am ready to imagine you a Cooper; for you seem to understand this Business much better than that of a Divine or Physician, in both which parts of Learning you are miserably defective. “ There is some Sense, you say, “ in hooping a Barrel; because it holds “ good Liquor. But the Vessels, of “ which we are speaking, seem to contain nothing Good in them, for that “ very Reason, because they are hoop’d: “ and very probably (contrary to the Nature of all other Casks) the more they “ are hoop’d, the more leaky they are.” It is very odd, Sir, that you should be angry that a pretty Girl does not contain as good Liquor as a Barrel: It is true you are a very liquorish Gentleman, and as you like the Ladies so daintily well, may have an Inclination to take a Sip: You are heartily Welcome; but I promise you Sir, I will not pledge you. But how comes it, that the more they are hoop’d, the more leaky they are? This is a new Discovery in Physick: Who besides you ever thought that a great *Hoop* would give a Lady the *Diabetes*: Yet upon this

Sup-

Supposition, I suppose you found your Assertion that many hundreds have died of this new Disease call'd the *Hoop-Petticoat*. However it must be supposed upon the same admirable Way of Reasoning, that if a great *Hoop* gives the Ladies the *Diabetes*, no *Hoop* at all must give them the *Strangury*.

“ Is it fit, you say, that every little
 “ Gentleman's or any Tradesman's Wife,
 “ or Daughter, should presume to dress
 “ against Nature and Reason, against Pro-
 “ portion, Congruity, and common Sense,
 “ as much as a Dutches or a Countess?
 “ These, and all other Ladies of Quality,
 “ especially of great Quality have, no doubt,
 “ a *Privilege* to contravene, or go beyond
 “ Reason and Nature. Whatever they
 “ do is right, because they do it, &c.
 This, any one would think at first Sight,
 to be nothing more than a Sneer; for
 there is no Man of common Sense, inca-
 pable of seeing that if any Dress can be
 against Nature and Reason, or in its own
 Nature immoral, it must be equally so,
 in a Dutches and a Tradesman's Wife:
 For the Title of the Wearer can never
 alter the Nature of Things, nor render
 that innocent which is in its own Nature
 Criminal. Yet you absurdly think other-
 wise,

wife, for you gravely add, “ that those of
 “ the inferior Sort (that is the little Gent-
 “ leman’s or *any* Tradesman’s Wife or
 “ Daughter) who will needs be at the
 “ top of the Fashion, and wear their
 “ *Hoops* as wide as Ladies of the highest
 “ Quality are contemptible Things, and
 “ are, accordingly, by all who have any
 “ Judgment, actually despis’d.” This is
 admirable, but you may enjoy this fine
 Way of Reasoning unenvied for me.

I must acknowledge that I am as much
 an Enemy to Extravagance and Luxury
 as you, or any Man can be ; no Person in
 low Circumstances, ought to live above
 them, or by affecting to imitate those of
 large Fortunes, to involve themselves and
 others in Misery and Distress. But is this
 always the Case ? Or can you be a Judge
 that it is generally so ? Have not Ladies
 without a Title, and even Tradesman’s
 Daughters, very frequently Fortunes su-
 perior to the Daughters of many Persons
 of Quality ? Or is a *Hoop-Petticoat* a
 proper Mark to distinguish the Great
 from only the Wealthy ? What is inno-
 cent in itself may be worn by all ; but
 what is not so, ought to be worn by
 none. But there is another Reason
 (which I have mention’d before) why
 Tradesmen’s Wives and Daughters ought
 above

above all others to encourage large *Hoops*; and that is to promote the Consumption of all the several Silks, Linnens, and Stuffs worn above the *Hoops*, almost all of which being manufactur'd at Home, every Lady that has a Fortune sufficient to maintain her in a genteel Manner, ought from a Love of her Country, and Compassion to the needy Mechanick, to encourage; especially at a Time when we are engag'd in a War that prevents the Exportation of these Fruits of their Labour.

One would imagine, by your constant and repeated Complaint of the Expensiveness of *Hoops* that our Bullion was us'd to stiffen them; and instead of Cane or Whale-Bone, they were surrounded with Ribs of Gold. But nothing is more unjust and ridiculous than what you have said on this Subject, for the Expence of *Hoops* even added to the Copiousness of the Gown and Petticoat, is so trifling as not to hurt a Man who has any tollerable Degree of Trade to support his Family; and for my Part, I should not be sorry to see these carried to a much wider Extent, were this the only Piece of Extravagance we could be charged with.

But I cannot conclude my Remarks upon your Tragi-Comic Pamphlet, without one Remark or two more upon your comical

cal Face. You tell us, that while you seem to *trifle*, you are very much in *earnest*; when you appear *merry*, you are really *sad*; *laughing on one Side of your Face, and crying on the other*. What a ridiculous Description! Can any Thing be imagin'd more grotesque and unnatural! Why, Sir, *Janus* he was a Fool to you, I cannot for my Life forbear endeavouring to form some Idea of these two Ill-match'd Sides of your Phiz, thus huddled together as if they were only join'd to form the Resemblance of a compleat Hypocrite. Good, Sir, Knight of the comical Countenance, if ever your ENORMEOUS ABOMINATION should have a second Edition let the World be favoured with the Portrait of this laughing crying Face of yours, drawn by the Hand of the facetious *Hogarth*, and this I dare say will be a greater Curiosity and infinitely more valuable than any Thing you can oblige the World with.

When you are reconcil'd to the Ladies, to Hoop-Petticoats, and all their Appurtenances, I shall, with Pleasure, subscribe myself,

Yours most heartily,

JACK LOVELASS.

